

8

Remarks

Claims 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by US patent 2,823,702 due to November. Claims 2, 3, 12, and 13 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being patentable over November. Claims 9, 10, 11, and 14 through 24 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over November in view of US patent 4,458,722 due to Dahn.

In responding to the arguments filed on July 11th, 2003, the Examiner has given the claim limitations their broadest possible reasonable reading and has therefore construed Novembers' figures 3 and 4 as illustrating first and second undulations having approximately equal radii. The Applicant respectfully disagrees. In particular, close examination of the undulations of November as best illustrated in figure 4 thereof show that the radius of the smaller diameter undulations is $2\frac{1}{2}$ times smaller than the radius of the outer undulations. The Examiner has therefore viewed two radii whose values differ by a factor of 2.5 as a reasonable interpretation of the words "approximately equal". The Applicant submits that construing two quantities differing by a factor of 2.5 to be "approximately equal" is not a reasonable broadest interpretation of the recited language, rather a clear contradiction thereof. Are two pounds approximately equal to five pounds? Are ten acres approximately equal to 25 acres? Are two inches approximately equal to five inches? Certainly not.

The Examiner is therefore respectfully request to reconsider his position in this matter.

In responding to the final rejection the Applicant has nevertheless decided to amend independent claim 1. A recitation of "substantially equal" radii is given at the end of the claim. In addition, the claim closely describes the geometry of a pair of neighboring undulations leading to recitations of a convex circular arc joined by a straight section, which is substantially transverse to the longitudinal extension of the pipe segment, and merging into a concave second arc which, in turn, leads to the second set of undulations. The first and fourth straight segments are mutually parallel to each other and are substantially perpendicular to the axis of the pipe. The corresponding portions of the November disclosure in the figures clearly illustrate straight pipe sections corresponding to the first and fourth sections recited in amended claim 1 which are neither substantially perpendicular to the axis of the bellows of November, nor substantially parallel to each other. Therefore, new claim 1 is clearly distinguished from the November disclosure. For consistency, claims 4, 5 and 9 have been cancelled. Former claim 14 has been replaced with new claim 25, which corresponds to amended claim 1 with additional recitation of circular arcs of approximately 180 degrees and specifying that the second and third segments are straight segments which are substantially parallel to each other and substantially parallel to the first and fourth straight segments. Clearly these additional limitations are further distinguished from November. Claims 15 and 16 have been amended to be dependent upon new claim 25, claims 17 through 20 cancelled and claims 21, 23, and 24 also amended to be dependent upon new claim 25.

10

The Applicant respectfully requests entry of amendment and passage to issuance. No new matter has been added in this amendment.

Respectfully submitted,



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